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A NEW SNAKE FROM CHINA.

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Doctor David C. Graham, whose explorations in the province of Szechwan, China, have added so much to our knowledge of its herpetological fauna, has recently sent to the National Museum an unusually interesting new ophidian species. It is an exceedingly handsome snake of a rather pale neutral color ornamented with bold black bands on the face and head, and the body festooned across the back with a narrow black ribbon studded with bright round beads of a whitish color. This pattern unlike that of related species, in which it fades and disappears in the fullgrown specimens, seems to retain its brightness in the present species, as the specimen received is an adult male over three feet long. The name has reference to the unique ornamentation.

*Elaphe perlacea*, new species.

*Diagnosis:* Scales at the middle of the body in 19 rows, about 13 keeled; anal divided; no subocular, anterior temporal one; supralabials 7; head pattern with a black prefrontal band bifurcating at the eye; body with narrow black cross-bands enclosing whitish scale centers; underside checkered.

*Type:* U. S. National Museum No. 76257.

*Type locality:* Yachow prefecture, Szechwan, China.

*Description of type-specimen:* Adult male; U. S. N. M. No. 76257; Yachow province, Szechwan; June, 1928, D. C. Graham, collector. Rostral much broader than high, broadly visible from above, sutures with internasals much longer than suture between the latter; internasals small, much broader than long, about two-thirds the size of the prefrontals, which are broadly in contact with supraocular; frontal as long as its distance from tip of snout, slightly longer than its width and the interparietal suture, somewhat broader in front than behind; parietals as long as frontal; nostril large between two subequal nasals; loreal trapezoid, much longer than high; one preocular widely separated from frontal; no subpreocular; two

small postoculars, both in contact with parietal, upper not in contact with anterior temporal; temporals 1+2; supralabials 7, third and fourth entering eye; 3 lower labials in contact with anterior chin-shields, which are slightly longer than the posterior; posterior chin-shields separated from each other by two small scales, in contact with one sublabial; 19 rows of scales, 11 to 13 rows very distinctly keeled, four lateral scales smooth anteriorly and three at midbody; towards vent and on tail all scales keeled, ventrals 229, obtusely angulate laterally; anal divided; 69 pairs of subcaudals. Color (in alcohol) tawny gray, more plumbeous on the sides and underneath; upper side of body and tail with a pattern of narrow black equidistant cross-bands formed by the back tips and bases of two adjacent scale rows the centers of most of the scales being whitish; each two cross-bands being joined at or on the ventrals so as to form about 37 oval rings, the effect being a continuous black garland studded with strongly contrasting white beads; underside plumbeous checkered with black blotches edged with white; head pattern black, very distinct; a band from first labial through nostril across the suture between rostral and internasals; another similar but broader, from suture between third and fourth supralabial through eye over posterior half of prefrontals, bifurcating in the eye projecting a broad black line backwards across postoculars, anterior half of first temporal to upper anterior part of sixth supralabial; a black  $\Lambda$ -shaped figure, the apex on the posterior half of frontal, extending backwards over parietals where bifurcating, the outer branch extending across second row of temporals to seventh supralabial, the parallel with the interparietal suture to the neck; on the lower lip one black spot on the suture between third and fourth sublabials appear as a continuation of the ocular band; another smaller spot on suture between second sublabial and anterior chin-shield.

*Dimensions:* On account of the hardness of the specimen the body can not be stretched sufficiently for very exact measurements. The total length is approximately 940 mm., tail 210 mm., total length 1150 mm. The ratio between body and tail is consequently about 4.5 : 1.

*Remarks:* The present species has its nearest relative in the Japanese *Elaphe conspicillata*, from which it differs in various important characters. Thus the latter has invariably 21 scale rows with feeble keels on only nine rows. The scale-formula is otherwise almost identical, except that the type of the new species has 229 ventrals, a greater number than the maximum recorded for the species from Japan. The head pattern is also the same, except that the arms of the parietal  $\Lambda$  are double and that a median occipital black line is absent. The body pattern differs considerably, however, apart from the fact that the marking disappears in the adult Japanese specimens, while it is strongly marked in the type of *E. perlacea*, which is full grown.

There is no reason to believe that any of the previous erroneous records of *E. conspicillata* occurring in China refer to the present species.